CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please cancel claims 3, 4 and 5 without prejudice, and amend the remaining claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A data packet~~tage~~ for holding an information request and corresponding response data together, the data packet comprising

a plurality of layers, the layers including a routing layer and a client request layer respectively containing routing information and ~~an~~ the information request,

the data packet~~tage~~ being transmittable over a distributed network including a plurality of processing nodes, ~~and each layer being interpretable by only a subset of the processing nodes~~

wherein the data packet is interpreted by a first of said processing nodes and is expanded to include a further layer containing routing information relating to a next stage in processing of the data packet to be performed at a second of said processing nodes whilst leaving said plurality of the layers intact and undisturbed.

2. (Currently amended) A package according to claim 1, wherein the layers further include at least one ~~or more~~ layer selected from a group containing client device information, user identification information, and application identification information.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently amended) A method of responding to an information request from a client device, ~~comprising~~ the method including the steps of ~~providing an information request in a client device~~

wrapping the information request in at least one ~~or more~~ layers to produce a request packet~~age~~,

transmitting the request packet~~age~~ over a distributed network comprising ~~a plurality of~~ first and second processing nodes, and

~~adding and/or removing layers to or from the package at one or more of the nodes,~~

~~processing the package at its final destination, and~~

generating a response packet~~age~~ for transmission back to the client device via the distributed network for responding to the information request,

wherein the first processing node performs analysis of the information request stored on the request packet and adds a layer to the request packet containing routing information relating to a next stage in processing of the request packet to be performed by the second processing node, the second processing node processing the request packet whilst leaving the at least one layer of the request packet intact and undisturbed, and wherein the step of generating the response packet generates the response packet to include said information request.

7. (New) A distributed network including

a data packet for holding an information request and corresponding response data together, said data packet comprising a plurality of layers, the layers including a routing layer and a client request layer respectively containing routing information and the information request,

a plurality of processing nodes each configured to interpret at least a respective one of the layers of said data packet and to add and/or remove layers before passing the data packet to another one of the nodes,

the data packet being adapted to be transmitted over the distributed network, the data packet being interpreted by a first of said processing nodes of said network and expanded to include a further layer containing routing information relating to a next stage in the processing of the

data packet to be performed at a second of the processing nodes of said network whilst leaving the plurality of layers of the data packet intact and undisturbed.

8. (New) A network according to claim 7, wherein the layers of the data packet further include at least one layer selected from a group containing client device information, user identification information, and application identification information.

9. (New) A system for responding to an information request from a client device, the system including

wrapping means configured to wrap the information request in at least one layer to produce a request packet;

first and second processing nodes;

transmitting means configured to transmit the request packet over a distributed network comprising each of said processing nodes; and

means configured to generate a response packet for transmission back to the client device via the distributed network for responding to the information request;

wherein the first processing node performs analysis of the information request stored on the **request** packet and includes means configured to add a further layer to the **request** packet containing routing information relating to a next stage in processing of the **request** packet to be performed at the second processing node, the second processing node processing the **request** packet whilst leaving said at least one layer of the **request** packet intact and undisturbed, and wherein the means configured to generate the response packet generates the response packet to include said information request.